

April 13, 2022 – EMPIRE VILLAGE COUNCIL WORK SESSION

The meeting was called to order at the Empire Township Hall and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Davis at 7:00 p.m. Upon a roll call, Council members Bacon, Barr, Chase, Davis, Dye, Palmer and Rademacher were present. Clerk Smith was also present.

CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – None.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA - Motion by Bacon, support by Palmer to approve the agenda as presented. Upon a voice vote, **MOTION PASSED.**

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS – John Collings commented on proposed SB Lake Water Study. Meg Walton commented on water issues.

COMMUNICATIONS – Bacon read letters from Amelia Vanderberg & County Inspections.

PRESENTATION – Martin Graf and Tim Korson presented an analysis of Water Rates. Korson described the components of the General Plan as required by the State of MI. The CIP for both 5 years and 20 years were examined in detail. 5-year CIP would cover the comments from EGLE, and the 20-year would cover long-term improvements. There was discussion of generator as the largest expense in the 5-year CIP. While requested by Friend, it was not mentioned in EGLE's most recent Sanitary Survey. Korson explained the information utilized in the rate study and some recommendations for generating revenue sufficient to meet the costs included in the 5-year CIP. Rademacher noted that a rate study should be completed annually. Bacon commented that the possible rate increase to be considered would cover costs for only 1 to 5 years. Davis agreed that prices and improvements are questionable beyond 5 years and a rate study should be completed annually or bi-annually to cover planned expenses. It was noted that the plan and rate schedule will need to be reviewed by EGLE for acceptance.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON PRESENTATION – Randy Nelson commented on the size and cost of the generator. Steve Stepanek asked if a generator could be leased. Meg Walton questioned whether a General Plan is required with less than 1K users. It was noted that EGLE's Sanitary Survey of 2 years ago requested this plan.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS – Report from ZA Grobbel was received.

COUNCIL MEMBER/COMMITTEE REPORTS – Bacon reported on the Tree Committee meeting. Chase reported on the Personnel Committee meeting. Barr reported that the Street Committee will meet on the 20th.

OLD BUSINESS

WATER RATE STUDY – There was consensus that Council members would like more time to review all the information and consider at the next work session. There was discussion of the outstanding bond. Smith will provide details on amount due and schedule.

PERSONNEL POLICY – Bacon described the focus and priorities utilized by the committee in developing this policy. Any questions or comments from Council members should be forwarded to the committee. There was a consensus that it be sent to the insurance company for review.

NEW BUSINESS

GROBBEL ENVIRONMENTAL SB LAKE TESTING PROPOSAL – Bacon suggested that this proposal be added to the Township agenda to discuss the continued costs of this testing. There was consensus this be added to the Regular meeting agenda with input from Grobbel.

HEALTH INSURANCE OPT-OUT – There was consensus that this be added to the Regular Meeting agenda for approval of setting up the 125 plan and 50% of premium as payment in lieu of benefits.

REQUEST BY MI SEA GRANT – EMPIRE BEACH EROSION- There was consensus that Mark Breederland be invited for a presentation on this topic.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Amelia Vandenburg spoke on trees in the Village and the area. Steve Stepanek commented that he and his wife are new residents and enjoyed attending their first meeting. Meg Walton and Randy Nelson commented on the cross-connection requirements.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENT – Rademacher commented on the high-risk devices included in the Cross-Connection Ordinance. Dye commented on article in the Record Eagle regarding the Grocers Daughter. Bacon commented that in her experience elected officials do feel a responsibility for any Village service whether they personally use it or not.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:50 p.m.

Derith Smith Empire Village Clerk

These are draft minutes for approval at the April 26, 2022, Regular Council meeting.